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January 21, 1977

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Channel trawling ban not 'Fairplay'

THE NUMBER of fishermen who read the shipping magazine 'Fairplay' is probably less than vast. But any who did happen to see an article headed 'Fish and Ships' in a recent issue must surely have been incensed as well as astonished at the opinions expressed by the author.

In claiming that fish and ships are a dangerous mixture, he asks if there is not an overwhelming case for keeping fishing craft and yachts out of separation schemes such as that operating in the English Channel.

He then goes on to answer his own loaded question with what on the surface appears to be a well-reasoned affirmative — well-reasoned, that is, if you happen to be the master of a supertanker whose loathing of fish is equalled only by his dislike of yachtsmen.

The 12-mile selective fishing limit along the south coast of England, following the geographical indentations of the coastline, pushes sailboats deep into and in places clear across the traffic separation lanes.

Trawlers, therefore, fish in these lanes and in the 'slip-road' channels leading to the lanes and thus create a hazard to the safe progress of the big ships steaming along them.

Both British and foreign fishermen are held guilty by the author — British since they can and do fish within and beyond the 12 mile line,

and foreign because in fishing as close as possible to the limit they tend to cluster in pockets of indentation.

All this is perfectly true. But the author is far from justified in drawing from these facts the conclusion that this warrants banning trawlers from fishing inside the separation lanes. For this is what he goes on to advocate, illustrating his case with hypothetical instances of merchant ships on their 'innocent' (sic) passage being unable to tell from the radar whether what they are overtaking is another slower merchant ship or a supertanker engaged in fishing; or coming up with several trawlers 'mixed up' (sic) with other shipping in and around the lane, and presented with 'the only practical solution' of

altering course 90 degrees and getting away from it all by heading out of the lane completely.

Running away like this, as he rightly points out, is no guarantee that other dangers will not be encountered; and worse, could add an hour to the ship's steaming time and perhaps cause her to miss a tide on arrival — a costly business for a supertanker or container ship, or indeed for any other cargo vessel.

The author draws a rather far-fetched parallel between such a situation and terrified lorries running away from pedestrians and cyclists on a motorway; and since pedestrians and cyclists are banned from motorways, it seems logical, by his way of thinking, that fishing and pleasure craft should be

similarly barred from trespassing within the traffic lanes.

These lanes are most definitely not just maritime motorways and to compare fishing vessels in the lanes with pedestrians on the M1 is plain ridiculous. Fishing craft (the noun he takes pains to use throughout his article) are also ships and have as much right in the lanes as any supertanker. More, in fact, if custom and usage are taken into account, than any of these mammoth newcomers now on passage through traditional fishing areas.

It seems particularly odd, at a time when Britain's fishing industry is fighting for its very life, that anyone with any sense of responsibility should advocate still further restriction of areas where fish may be taken, and it is to be hoped that little notice, if any, will be taken of the views expressed.

Perhaps the Editor of Fairplay had reservations for, while publishing the article, he did add a footnote drawing attention to the fact that Rule 10(e) of the new 1972 Collision Avoidance Rules clearly establishes the right to fish in traffic separation lanes, although paragraph (f) of the same Rule says that 'a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any vessel following a traffic lane'.

Whether 'not impeding' means hauling the gear every time a supertanker approaches, however, is something that may one day have to be settled in the courts.

Six trawlers top £50,000

GRIMSBY got off to a fine start in 1977 with no less than six distant water vessels topping £50,000 out of ten White Seas trips.

For the first time in living memory not a single middle water trawler made a landing over the four-day week and, considering this important factor, the weekly total of just over 16,000 kits landed was quite an achievement.

The loss of the middle water fish hit many of the smaller merchants, but by buying from other sources, mostly overland supplies, everyone, big and small alike, kept going and the disaster forecast before the holiday never materialised.

Some White Seas did climb well over the £40 per kit mark on the first day of trading, but generally it settled for the rest of the week in the upper £30s, with the bulk buyers and processors cornering most of the distant water landings.

The year was just two days old when the first new grossing record was set up by the Boston Group's Boston Hoey (Skipper Colin Newton). The big sidewinder, back from a 26-day trip, turned out

2,234 kits, including 1,700 of codstuffs and 500 of haddock, for a grossing which bettered an old Boston company record by a clear £10,000, established almost exactly three years ago to the day.

With not a single plotter among the landings, and likelihood now, it collected the next four days with the string of cod haddock catches.

Second spot in the list was taken by the Scott (Skipper B. Scott) also turned in a best after 24 days, and was followed home by the Northern Gift (£52,961 1,617) and Ross Res (£52,463) before Boston back into the picture (£52,558).

An interesting view among the distant waterers the farthest stern to Polarborg II (Skipper St. Johannesen), making a catch of White Sea fish.

Easily the best quality landed, who was some unfortunate not to get more than her £46,500 from 1,379 kits, and 990 of codstuffs.



Fish boxes on Polarborg II being washed before going to sterilising.

RUSSIANS SCOOP THE SPRAT POOL

EAST EUROPEAN vessels will need a licence to fish inside Community waters from February 1. An ultimatum is being put to Russia, Poland and East Germany to comply and send a list of named vessels — or get out. The size of each of these fleets will have to correspond with the quota allotted to East European nations for the first three months of this year.

This strong move by the EEC is believed to have been stimulated by the heavy Soviet fishing, especially in British waters.

The advent of a 200-mile limit for Britain has done little to stem the 'red tide'. The North Sea sprat fishery, which has been a magnet for British vessels, is now attracting the main attention of the Russian fleet. And there are strong suspicions they are going way over quota.

On Tuesday there were 19 Russian trawlers inside the

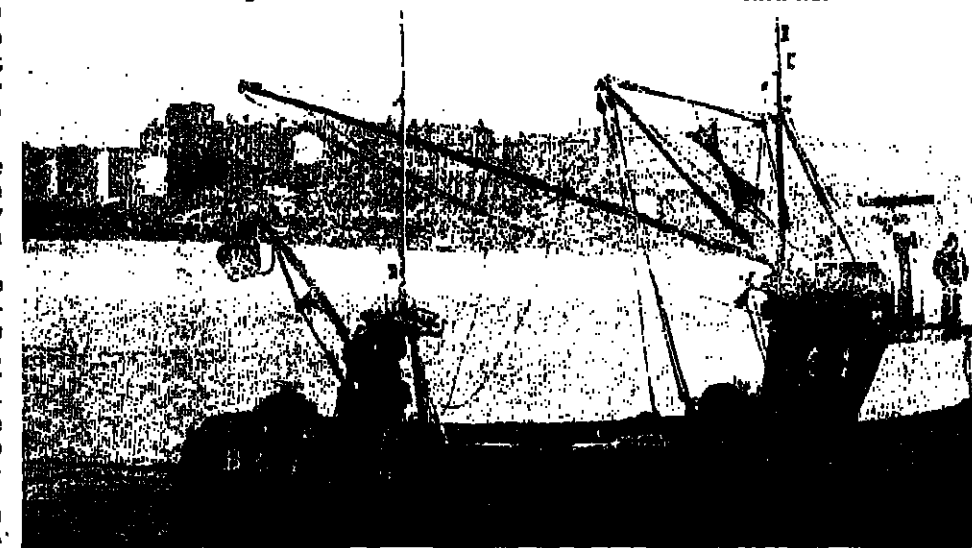
200-mile limit. Only one vessel was in the Western Channel and the other 18 were all in the North Sea area. At the weekend, 39 Russian vessels were on the sprat grounds.

"There is no way", one skipper told Fishing News, "that the Russians can

adhere to having their total catch cut by a third and fish the way they are". Speculation was heightened on Monday when a report in The Guardian newspaper suggested that Whitehall is now resigned to the fact that the Russians would exceed their quota.

On pages 8 and 9 this week, Fishing News looks at sprat operations based on North Shields.

North Shields has been a magnet for the sprat fleet. Jensen is a Buckle boat and, in the background, is Newington Trawlers' wooden-hulled 75-footer Burton Constable.



Move for Iceland fish ban

THE Federation of British Trawler Officers is pressing for a ban on imports of Icelandic-caught frozen fish and fish products.

Dockers at Hull have already been asked for their support.

Skipper Tom Nielsen, secretary of both the federation and Hull Trawler Of-

ficers' Guild, said on Monday: "We put our case to the Hull dockers when three representatives of our federation met 40 shop stewards last week."

"The dockers gave us a sympathetic hearing but told us they must also have discussions with the fishing industry's ancillary trades before making any decision."

"We want a nation-wide boycott on Icelandic-caught frozen fish and frozen fish products for various reasons."

'Unfair'

"We consider it most unfair that these imports should be arriving in Britain at a time when our own men are still banned from fishing off Iceland."

"Our men are very bitter about this, particularly as Mr. Gundlach, the EEC fisheries commissioner, was understood to have given an assurance some time ago that, while negotiations with Iceland were going on, no Icelandic fish would be landed in the UK in order not to aggravate the situation."

Just for the record

Kelvin Hughes have introduced two multi-purpose echo sounders, the Depmar 103 and 131. Their economical price belies their performance, and their size and reliability make them ideal for the smaller vessel.

DEPMAR 103

The DEPMAR 103 has eight depth ranges between 0 and 280 fathoms. Sounding rate, paper speed and pulse length are automatically adjusted to the range in use. Power consumption is only 29W from a 24V d.c. supply, and compact 50 kHz transducers are available for wooden, fibreglass and steel vessels. Adjustable white line, and 'bottom' anywhere are featured for fishing.

Depmar 103 and 131 echo sounders are available now from Kelvin Hughes. Write or phone for full details.

DEPMAR 131

Smaller than the 103, the DEPMAR 131 is only 210 x 280 x 160 mm and weighs 6.6 kg (14½ lbs). It has six depth ranges between 0 and 120 fathoms with alternative scales to 240 fathoms and, in addition, a 'flasher' with two range scales, providing for paper economy on passage. The DEPMAR 131 has 4 inch wide paper compared with the 103's 6 inch, but like the 103 it has white line, a 'bottom' anywhere

facility, and very low power consumption. Alternative 60 kHz or 200 kHz transducers are available for wooden and fibreglass vessels, and a 50 kHz transducer for steel vessels.

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COMMENT

Lacking knowledge

WHAT WE were saying in this column last week about needing more people in Brussels who knew something about fishing, was underlined on Wednesday, by John Silkin, Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food.

Called to give evidence in the House of Commons to the Committee now conducting an inquiry into the fishing industry, Mr. Silkin said that the EEC does not have sufficient expertise or staff to deal with the problems relating to fishing. The only way this expertise can be gathered is through help from national governments. Mr. Silkin went on to point out that Britain was streets in front of the others when it came to contributing knowledge on fisheries matters.

In what amounted to a drum-banging session for his Government and Ministry, Mr. Silkin went on to say that we also led the field when it came to protecting our fisheries. We think there might be a few fishermen who would dispute this.

From the Committee's questions to the Minister, it became apparent that they were as equally confused as fishermen about how our protection fleet is operated. One member of the Committee who had been out with the fleet, referred to a two-and-a-half hour delay when it came to a decision on whether to approach a foreign vessel. There seems to be confusion in the roles of the Ministry of Defence and MAFF in these matters.

So far, it has fallen to Britain to protect 60 per cent of the fish stocks in the EEC pool. Although official estimates put the cost of protection at around £5m we tend to believe an unofficial costing, which includes air patrols, of near £26m.

This is a lot of money to employ in maintaining a soft political line with offending foreign fleets.

THREE DEAD AFTER COBLE'S MAYDAY

THREE MEN died during the night of January 12/13 when the 34ft. cable Sea Triumph (SH 4) mysteriously sank in the Humber estuary as she was being taken round to Hull: from Scarborough.

The men were later identified as the owner of the vessel, Melvyn Stephenson (28), father of four and formerly a trawlerman who was licensee of the Albion Hotel, Hull; Benjamin Rowbottom (46), also father of four and formerly a trawlerman of Hull and Harry Scott (38), father of three and a trawler cook from Hull.

Mr. Stephenson bought Sea Triumph in October and the men were bringing her to Hull where they had planned to fish her for recreation.

The drama began at 20.04 hours on January 12 when Spurn coastguard picked up an interrupted Mayday signal. The message was "Mayday, Mayday, we are sinking in the river... Sea Triumph".

It was also picked up by shipping in the Humber, but was cut short before a position could be given.

Immediately the Humber lifeboat was launched and an RAF helicopter from Leconfield joined in the search, but was forced back to base by fog, snow and poor visibility.

The lifeboat, however, kept up the search throughout the night. Around 02.00 hours the lifeboat came across flotsam in the river which was positively identified as belonging to Sea Triumph.

At first light on January 13 the RAF helicopter resumed the air-sea search. Whilst concentrating on the south bank between Grimsby and Donna Nook, a dayglo object was spotted in the sea which proved to be the first body clad in an immersion suit and life-jacket.

It was lifted from the sea



Sea Triumph — lost with her three-man crew on a delivery trip.

and landed by the helicopter at the nearby RAF Station North Cotes.

Sweeping over the same area off North Cotes point, the helicopter picked up an empty lifejacket, and also put down at RAF North Cotes.

water. It was landed at RAF North Cotes.

Returning for a third time to the same area the final body was located, without a lifejacket, and also put down at RAF North Cotes.

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Deckhand gets 'life'

GRIMSBY deckhand Peter Barber (23) was dismissed from the fishing industry by Grimsby Port Disciplinary Committee last week following Christmas Day incidents aboard the trawler William Wilberforce.

Three other deckhands — Frank Drinkall (51) of Grimsby, and George Lee (31) and August Spence (27) both of Hull — were each suspended for 50 days.

Additionally, Lee forfeited an 84-day suspension. Charges against Brian Newland (38) of (Neethorpe) were dismissed.

Father, who did not attend the hearing, said in a letter that he became involved in a scuffle with Newland on Christmas Day.

He denied hitting him with a bottle and claimed a broken sauce bottle lying on the floor had caused injuries to Newland which forced William Wilberforce into Himmingsvang, Norway, for

hospital treatment.

Once in the Norwegian port, Drinkall also went to the hospital for attention to an old shoulder injury. Later Lee and Barber went to collect Drinkall and take clothes to Newland.

The vessel had just arrived on the fishing grounds, had not shot her gear, returned light.

At the hearing, Dr. Spence and Lee demanded drink from skipper.

And the money we are talking about is £4,000 a year."

He described the way fishermen are paid as "absolutely laughable". A man could be in a position where his skipper's pay is 20 times greater than his own.

"This is ludicrous. There has got to be a fairer distribution of the wealth of the fishing industry."

Fishermen's "second-class citizenship" would not be accepted anywhere else in any industry in the country.

Second engineer, Mr. Alexander Carmichael, was fined £175 for culpable homicide charge £100 for failing to report orders telegraphed to engineer because he was drunk.

Skipper Morris was fined £100 for culpable homicide charge £100 for failing to report orders telegraphed to engineer because he was drunk.

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OWNERS ATTACKED Trawlermen bossed by 'Philistines'

DAVID CAIRNS, National Fishing Officer for the Transport and General Workers' Union, has told fishermen and ancillary workers at Fleetwood that trawler owners are the most reactionary employers he had ever met. He said that Britain would have to switch to middle-water fishing, with deep water fishing carrying on in a very limited capacity.

"Which port these vessels will sail from is in the hands of the Philistines", he said. Employers would sail boats from the port which is best for them, regardless of what it meant to their workers.

"I am not going to say there are good employers because I have never met one", he said. "To me, the fishermen is a second-class citizen."

Everything we get is of a secondary nature and they have virtually no entitlement at all to the social benefits of the nation outside the labour exchange.

"How can you claim unfair dismissal from a situation where you are virtually never employed? You are employed from trip to trip."

"We must be able to say to a fishermen 'You will be employed from January to December and you will get no less than a certain amount'. And the money we are talking about is £4,000 a year."

He described the way fishermen are paid as "absolutely laughable". A man could be in a position where his skipper's pay is 20 times greater than his own.

"This is ludicrous. There has got to be a fairer distribution of the wealth of the fishing industry."

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Why miss fish?

Salmon fishing time slashed

A ROW is brewing at the south coast port of Mudeford over a new fishing by-law which will cut the time fishermen can catch salmon in Mudeford Run.

The new salmon netting season opens in February and fishermen say the by-law made by the Wessex Water Authority will cut their fishing time in half.

The Wessex Water Authority says it is willing to meet a deputation of Mudeford fishermen for talks.

The by-law was made and approved by the Ministry of Agriculture to help conserve dwindling salmon stocks.

'Vanguard'—good news

THERE WAS good news for British United Trawlers last week when its Grimsby-based freezer *Ross Vanguard*, which grounded north of Tromsø, Norway, last month, was inspected in a dry-dock at Immingham.

It is understood the vessel has suffered only minor damage, mainly to sounding equipment, and could be back at sea within a few weeks.

BOARD BACKS FISH PLANT FOR LEWIS

DETAILED proposals for building a fish drying factory with pier at Breasclete on East Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis, have been prepared by the Highlands and Islands Development Board in partnership with a Norwegian firm.

The proposals are the first development in the board's plans for the expansion of fisheries to the west of the Hebrides and envisage the establishment by the board of its own commercial enterprise.

Professor Kenneth Alexander, chairman of the board, has said that the implementation of the proposals would require the co-operation and support of a number of interests and public bodies.

"The board has started discussions towards this end. We have been meeting local crofters and landowners in Lewis with a view to the purchase by the board of the small quantity of land which would be required at Breasclete for the project.

"We also met representatives of the Western Isles Islands Council and held a meeting in Breasclete to inform the people of the community about our proposals."

Professor Alexander also stressed that the proposals would require to be approved by Government.



Breasclete, Isle of Lewis, where the HIBD plans to build a new pier and fish drying plant.

The board's project involves a fish drying process based on a technology developed in Norway but not so far used on a commercial basis in the United Kingdom. The species of fish required for the project are in plentiful supply west of the Hebrides

but are not at present fully used by UK fishing interests. It is believed that the project will provide an additional sales outlet for the Scottish fishing fleet.

The project will entail building a pier at Breasclete capable of handling fishing

vessels at all states of the tide, and the construction of a factory to operate on a year-round basis.

It would provide full-time jobs for over 30 people and some 15 part-time jobs. The estimated cost is in the region of £750,000.

Run of records at Fleetwood

MORE records were smashed at Fleetwood last week as the port was caught in a relative fish famine. There was only one landing by a distant water vessel.

The stern trawler *Norina*, commanded by Skipper Frank Wilson, returned from the White Sea after spending Christmas and New Year at sea. She landed 1,440 kits, including 1,100 of cod, which sold for £44,312. This is a new port record for the smaller class of stern trawler.

The pocket trawler *Replenish* also got into the records. She returned to port with 344 kits, including 40 of cod, 17 of haddock, 100 of coley, 20 of roker and 110 of dogs, which sold for £9,241 — the biggest total ever made by a vessel owned by J. N. Ward and Son Ltd. Skipper Mick Oldman commands the trawler.

It was also a good week for other Ward vessels. The stern trawler *Resound* (Skipper Charlie Pook) landed 282 kits, including 40 of cod, 10 of haddock, 115 of coley and 75 of dogs which sold for £7,273.

The pocket trawler *Resolute* has had an excellent run lately under Skipper Bill Ansell and her latest trip was no exception. The boat returned to port with 255 kits, including 30 of cod, 10 of haddock, 70 of coley, five of roker and 80 of dogs which sold for £8,431.

Hewett Fishing Co.'s 109ft. sister-ships, *Royalist* and *London Town*, managed to overcome some appalling weather and landed good catches. *Royalist*, with Skipper Jack Pickens in command, landed 321 kits, including five of hake; 75 of cod, 30 of haddock, 55 of coley, 15 of roker and 60 of dogs, which sold for £8,604. *London Town* (Skipper Peter Wayman) landed 243 kits —

75 of cod, 30 of haddock, 10 of coley, 15 of roker and 50 of dogs — which sold for £8,135. In the middle-water section there was only one landing. The stern trawler *Idena* (Skipper Dave Geddes) returned after a trip hit by frequent gales. She managed to catch 443 kits, including 70 of cod, 120 of haddock, 125 of coley, 15 of roker and 60 of dogs, which sold for £13,230. She worked a variety of grounds.

There were excellent prices throughout the week, with cod going up to £47 a kit. Hake, however, provided the highlight. A kit of medium hake landed by *Boston Sea Hawk* made £98 — a new record for the port. There were also near record prices for many other varieties.

A GIANT lifeboat shaped cheque for £110,000 was given to the RNLI at the London Boat Show by the Round Table on Friday, January 7. The money will go towards a new *Waveney* class lifeboat to be stationed at Newhaven, Sussex, named *Louis Marchesi of Round Table*.

THE FORMER Grimsby seiner *Thor*, now Boston-owned and working from the south Lincolnshire port, had to summon Skegness lifeboat late on Thursday last week.

She was being swept out to sea in gale-force winds and a blizzard after a net had fouled her propeller.

Skipper-owner Raymond Maltby and crewman, Peter Warren, both suffered from exposure after a day mostly spent trying to free the propeller in worsening weather. Finally the pair were forced

Eight nabbed in a night

EIGHT large boats have been caught inside the Cornish three-mile limit in one night and "action" will be taken in due course.

Cornwall's chief fishery officer, Broadland Tonkin, told Cornish Sea Fisheries Committee members this when they met for their quarterly meeting last week.

Mr. Tonkin said the three-mile limit is more important now than at any other time.

"There are mackerel from three miles out to the shore," he said. "The men who fish for them should get the protection they need."

He appealed to magistrates to make full use of the new Fishery Limits Act which together with the bylaws, meant fines being increased from £50 to £1,000, plus confiscation of catch and gear.

"We cannot tell them their job," he said. "I only hope they will be on the side of the Cornish line men."

Mr. Tonkin said a number of prosecutions were now pending. Of the eight boats it was one night, he said that the were all fishing well inside the limit and from 1 1/2 miles out. They came from Grimsby, Scotland and Peterhead as well as from local ports.

"The next night we saw 3 boats in the area but not as ventured inside the limit."

Mr. Tonkin said that trawlermen seemed to know where the patrol vessel *Palours* is each night, and went out of their way to avoid her.

"To catch them means we must send two officers on board a fishing boat to collect as much evidence as we can. They will fight the case, because this time £1,000, plus confiscation of gear and catch, is at risk as not just a fine of £50."

The day of the "Gull" plan is over.

"We cannot patrol 24 hours a day, but with the publicity that will be given to these pending court cases, and the other being prosecuted, we hope will deter fishermen from breaking the law."

Cornish skippers returning to port on Sunday reported to lead mackerel grounds. This is evidence of fish-dumping which in winter became a feature of the fishery. Then, the sea became polluted for miles.

'THOR' SAVED

to give up and radio for help as the disabled vessel was swept further and further to sea.

By the time *Skegness* lifeboat reached *Thor* was some six miles off coast and the weather was bad. It was difficult to get a foothold on her deck. The lifeboat towed *Thor* to Skegness where she beached.

Neither man required hospital treatment after spending the night at the day resort, began freeing the fouled propeller.

January 21, 1977

Meal plant calls a halt

HEAVY LANDINGS of sprats proved too much for Grimsby Fish Meal Co.'s reduction plant last week and it had to restrict landings and finally call a temporary halt.

Grimsby is the most southerly operational fish meal processing centre and this means it handles offal and fish from all points south.

Lately, it has been very busy with mackerel from Channel ports like Plymouth and Penzance.

These contracts were made last autumn when the factory was short of work.

The Grimsby plant handles somewhere in the region of 3,000 tonnes a week of raw material, with sprats and mackerel accounting for nearly three-fifths of the work load.

Sprat marks are now well south of Flamborough and, once a vessel is on to a shoal, it can fill up very quickly.

Currently 18 Grimsby vessels are spratting. Most have a capacity of around 50 to 60 tonnes, but there are exceptions like *Samantha* which can easily manage 100 tonnes.

Jil-Annon, however, can only cope with about 35 tonnes.

Additionally, the occasional visitor from Denmark or elsewhere drops in with a full load — usually in excess of 100 tonnes — like the Scots pair *Atlantic Star* and *Noronya* which recently arrived with 160 tonnes.

Last week, because of the glut of sprats and heavy deliveries of mackerel into Grimsby, a queue of local vessels built up. Some were in port over 48 hours before their turn came to discharge, although the meal company did its best to ensure delays were kept to a minimum.

Finally, on Thursday last week, owners were advised of a temporary shutdown once the existing backlog had been cleared.

Many fishermen were not too pleased. Skipper Francois Wintain, arriving on the Thursday with a deck cargo and full fishroom of sprats in *Glenda*, told *Fishing News* that he had been told he must



Grimsby's sprat quay with *Araona Champion*, *Saxon King*, *Samantha*, *Homeward*, *Cleo* and *Yolande-Anne* waiting their turns. Skippers had a long wait to unload.

Other skippers faced similar problems and one told *Fishing News* he would probably land in Denmark rather than cease fishing. Unfortunately, the sprats are so close to the coast that the steaming time, and the cost, would not make this viable for most Grimsby boats.

In a desperate move to save the 70 tonne catch on *Glenda*, worth over £3,000, Skipper Wintain sailed for Esbjerg, Denmark, late on Tuesday.

Landing restarted yesterday (Thursday) at a rate of approximately 160 tonnes daily, but the meal company gave warning of a reduction to 100 tonnes daily from January 24 and May after this intake, either way with one week's notice thereafter.

Last month, skippers met to discuss the situation and a further meeting was held on Wednesday in an effort to save the 14-year-old industry at Grimsby from collapsing.

Just to make matters worse, the consensus of opinion among sprat fishermen is that the present season is likely to be short-lived and could even be over by the end of January.

The Hull meal plant handles mackerel from the south, as well as all the sprats from Hull and North Shields.

Billingsgate

NOT EVERY merchant in Billingsgate sells fish. There are poultry dealers, potato merchants and those very interesting firms, the sundriesmen.

Their shops are hung, strewn and packed with all the items necessary for the efficient running of a successful fish shop — wet, dry or fried. They will clothe the blockman in overalls, apron, boots and his thick woolly socks. They will provide the serving assistant with price boards, printed and blank, legally required name tickets, plastic scoops for prawns and shrimps, cartons for jellied eels and bales of new unused copies of the *Dagenham Recorder* and *County Herald* for the final wrap.

The fryer can buy his oil, chip scoop, vinegar, garkins — and replace his favourite filling knife that the boy threw out with the gut bin last week. Salt, bright yellow dye and even seaweed are there for the smoker. How any sundriesman can possibly know the extent and location of all his stock is beyond the comprehension of normal men.

Their premises have much in common with the old-fashioned village store, with goods cluttered and draped from every possible point of attachment. On the walls are examples of the poster artists' work, exhorting the customer to buy while delicately suggesting that to ask for credit might give rise to offence. Traditional elm cutting boards stand in descending order of size, lying for custom with modern high-impact and super hygienic plastic boards.

The doyen of this trade is the firm of Thompson and Lawell. This year — just one year behind the United States — it is celebrating its bi-centennial. Two hundred years ago, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Lawell joined together in a shop at the top of Lovat Lane to serve the needs of London's fishermen; and now a few hundred yards to the west in the shade of Monument, the firm is managed by John Goddard. He had time to learn his stock — he's been there for 51 years!

OBITUARY

MR. J. H. THOMPSON, chairman of the Sunderland Marine Mutual Insurance Company Ltd., has died aged 87.

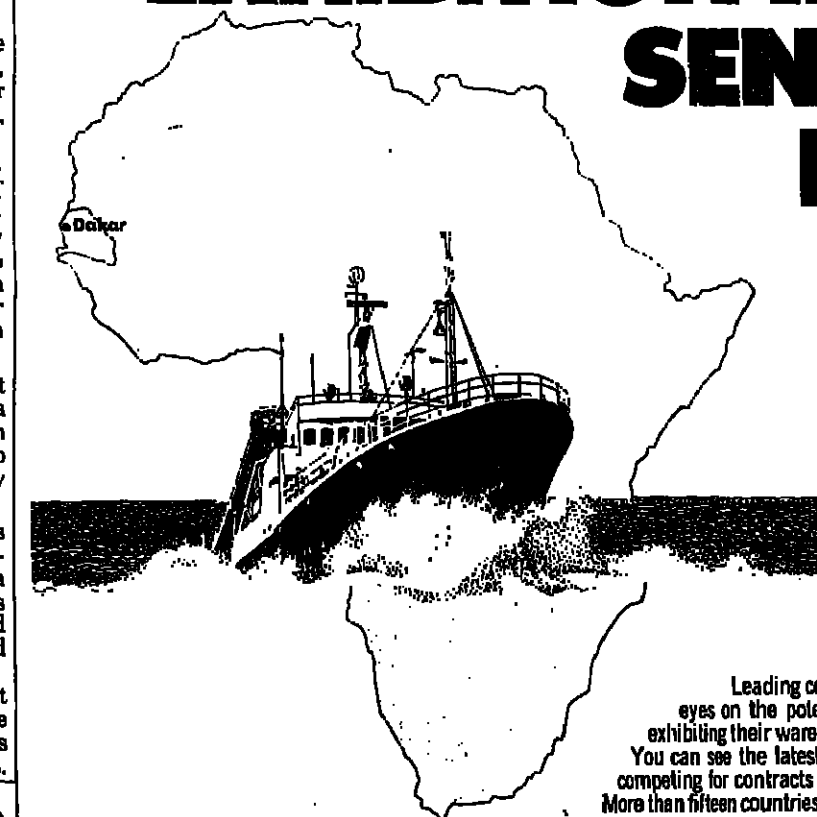
Mr. Thompson had been on the board of directors of the company for 32 years, the last 16 years as chairman.

He was a director and chairman during a period which saw great changes in the organisation and the role of the company which insures fishing vessels.

Mr. Thompson was a director and tug manager of C. J. King & Sons (Tugs) Ltd. of Bristol until his retirement in 1974 and was well known in shipping circles for his knowledge of harbour towage.

Before his retirement he was an active member of the British Tug Owners' Association and the Bristol Steam Ship Owners' Association. He was a founder member of the Bristol Ship Lovers' Society and past president of the Bristol Shipping Staffs' Association.

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You will also be impressed by Dakar's imposing new port development plans and the dramatic advances envisaged for fishing fleet facilities and land-based processing plants.

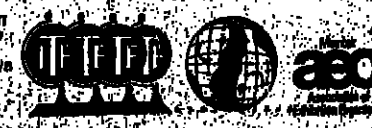
The African Fisheries exhibition has the full backing of the Senegalese Government, the Senegalese Department of Fisheries, the Senegalese Department of Foreign Trade and the F.A.O. and the sponsorship of "World Fishing". Dakar is a major port of call serviced by the world's top airlines and on the Concorde route between South America and Europe. American Express have put together special money-saving inclusive travel arrangements for you. Ask your local American Express office.

Come to Dakar and combine business with pleasure. Enjoy West Africa's top holiday resort, its fine hotels, beaches, recreational facilities and above all its superb climate. Send for your admission tickets and other relevant information. Do it now! It will pay you to be there!

african fisheries

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10-00 to 20-00 hours daily

IT, organisers of African Fisheries Exhibition, also organises World Fishing Exhibition in Hull, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1978. For details contact: African Fisheries Exhibition, 221, Regent Street, London W1A 2AB. Tel: 01-259 2881.



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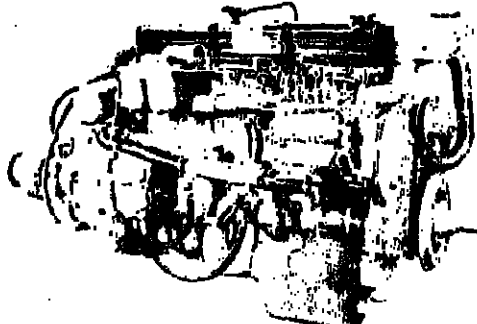
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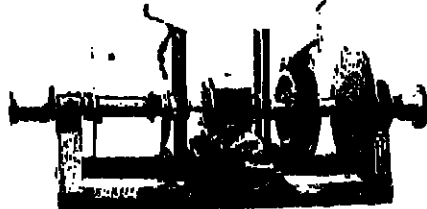
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Newlyn base for 31-footer

BOY ANTONY (below) is the latest boat designed and completed by the yard of C. Toms and Son Ltd. at Polruan, Cornwall.

She has been built for Mr. C. S. Hosking of Mousehole and will work out of Newlyn. The yard has designed Boy Antony for lining, potting, netting and mackereling, and she has fish and net rooms under a laid deck.

With a length of 31ft. 6in., beam of 11ft. 6in. and draft of 3ft. 3in., she is powered by a Lister HRW3 4MGR2, rated at 58 hp at 2,200 rpm, driving a 23in. propeller. On trials she reached a speed of 8.2 knots.

Her forward wheelhouse is equipped with a Kelvin Hughes echo sounder and Seavoice radio. On deck a Hydema power winch and capstan head are fitted and she has hydraulic steering.

Her builders say that the cost of this wooden boat, with oroko decking, compares well with that of a GRP equivalent.



Alcarfa — sailing for Saudi Arabia on a WFA fisheries project.

THREE VESSELS AFRICA - BOUND

TWO Fleetwood side trawlers sold by Boston Deep Sea Fisheries to a firm operating out of Monrovia, Liberia, could be sailing for Africa in the next two weeks.

Boston Attacker and Boston Marauder are now waiting for the installation of refrigeration equipment.

Colin Hughes, a chartered engineer at Liverpool who arranged the purchase of the vessels, said there had been a small contractual difficulty over the new equipment. When this is cleared up it would only take about nine days to equip the vessels. "It is no use them going as they are because there are the icing facilities which are going. And in the temperatures it will be very quickly, so they will have to return to port only a few days."

The vessels worked the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel. A third ship bound for Africa is Alcarfa. Due to today from Alexandra D. Hull, the ship was built while still under construction in Spain.

She was one of six deep-sea trawlers building Wilbino for operation in Angola, but political upheaval in the African country had given the plans a back.

The White Fish Authority bought the ship on behalf of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for a four-year fisheries development project there.

Alcarfa has been extensively refitted at the Hull base of the Humber Graving Dock and is now a well-equipped fisheries research vessel.

The 2,100-ton ship is 118ft. and is being sailed to Jeddah by her new captain, J. Skipworth.

'Sealion' top at Milford

MILFORD Haven trawlers have got off to a flying start this year with some big grossings.

Last week four vessels took advantage of excellent markets to make good returns. Top ship was *Picton Sealion* (Skipper John Rogers). The vessel landed 148 kits which sold for £5,897.

On the same day *Picton Sea Eagle* (Skipper Robert Foster) made £4,878 from 118 kits and *Arthur Harvey*, under Skipper John Donovan, made £1,327 from 25 kits.

Between them the vessels landed a total of 30 kits of cod, 15 of whittings, 100 of roker, 10 of turbot and brill, five of plaice and 10 of soles. Landings were completed by *Bryher* (Skipper A. James) who caught 111 kits. Two kits of haddock, 20 of cod, 15 of whittings, 30 of roker, five of turbot and brill, 10 of plaice and five of soles were the vessel's main varieties.

The vessels worked the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel.

'Jellicoe' safe

THE 300-TON Aberdeen trawler *Admiral Jellicoe* ran aground at Shetland last week.

On Sunday she went on to the Lusseter Baa on her way into Mid Yell. She was aground for about five hours before being helped off by the *Granston* boat *Ross Hawk*, which got a line on board. Damage was not serious enough to stop *Admiral Jellicoe* fishing.

Admiral Jellicoe has been extensively refitted at the Hull base of the Humber Graving Dock and is now a well-equipped fisheries research vessel.

The 2,100-ton ship is 118ft. and is being sailed to Jeddah by her new captain, J. Skipworth.

The message went in a telegram signed by William Badcock, the chairman, on behalf of all Devon inshore fishermen.

But there was cheerful message for the committee at its quarterly meeting from the county's chief fisheries officer, Mr. Worden, who said that in the past decade Brixham and Plymouth had more than doubled their landings of demersal and pelagic fish.

Also, the shellfish fleets of Dartmouth and Salcombe had "held their heads high" as the top crab landing stations in the county.

The committee is to ask the MAFF to raise the minimum size of crabs which can be landed at British ports, so as to help preserve diminishing stocks.

In 1972 the committee's plea to raise the minimum from 4in. was rejected by the Ministry, which said that the

Sister-ship due

GRIMSBY (GY 341), a multi-purpose vessel for fishery owners and agents A. E. Richardson & Co., is expected at the Humber port this weekend. The new wood vessel, built at the Marstal Traskilbs yard, Marstal, was due to run trials last Friday afternoon, but a serious set back or bad weather, was scheduled to leave for Grimsby some time this week. She is a sister-ship to *Margaret*, delivered last year and now sprouting. She is commanded by Skipper Sorenson.

Force 9 tow saves Buckie seiner

THE BUCKIE seiner *Rhodella* berthed safely at Peterhead last Friday night after a 29-hour rescue drama in which she almost foundered.

The seiner was towed 180 miles in a force nine gale by the Peterhead boat *Marigold*. The drama began on Thursday night when her propeller was fouled by debris 180 miles ENE of Peterhead. Skipper Peter Duncan and his crew aboard *Marigold* picked up the radio call for help 40 miles away.

Because other boats in the area could not be contacted, *Marigold* battled her way through rough seas to aid the Buckie boat and reached her at midnight.

Said Skipper Duncan: "To put it bluntly, the boat could

have been lost and that is why I went 40-miles to her aid. The men on the boat were obviously in deep trouble and we had to help."

As *Marigold* towed *Rhodella* across Forties Field, the wind was blowing at 60 knots. "There was a 30ft. swell and there were quite a few times when we could not see *Rhodella*", he said.

The tow line kept coming off and eventually broke 1 1/2 miles from Peterhead. It broke again a half-mile from the port.

At that point Peterhead coastguard duty officer sent out an alert for the local coastguard rescue team and the lifeboat was also put on standby.

Said the coastguard: "She

broke lines in a force eight to nine wind and the bay was like a cauldron. We had grave fears that *Rhodella* might end up on the rocks.

However, as the 17-men on the coastguard rescue team lined the shore, *Marigold* re-established the tow and brought both boats through to safety."

Fishing News spoke to a relieved coastguard team after returning to base. Their comment: "It was a marvelous bit of seamanship on the part of the skipper of *Marigold*."

The Fraserburgh boat *Vivian* took a catch of 1,300 units during the middle of the week. A second klondyker, *Midnight Sun*, was expected to arrive at the beginning of the week and other local boats are preparing to change over to herring because of the scarcity of pout.

Public inquiry at Portsmouth Guildhall has followed a long series of local arguments about oyster rights over 60 acres of seabed known as The Deepes.

The Ministry of Agriculture Inspector, Mr. F. Malloes, refused to grant exclusive rights to the oysters there to local fisherman, John Woods, after taking oral and written evidence from 60 other full time and part-time fishermen.

But his adjudication included a clause suggesting that some kind of regulation to prevent over-fishing would be necessary.

"The loss of The Deepes would be serious to fishermen based in Portsmouth and Langstone Harbours. Some are young men working small boats with the minimum of help and needing to be able to work in sheltered waters in bad weather for their livelihood," he said.

Mr. Malloes added that Mr. Woods is a man who could be relied upon to work, control and improve the fishery, even though the judgement went against him. The local committee has already registered an application for a regulation order with the ministry, giving it sole fishing rights which could then be leased short-term to individual fishermen.

"One of our main considerations is to ensure the preservation of oysters for future generations, so anyone applying to us for a lease would have to convince us he is prepared to cultivate the beds as well as fish them," said the committee's chief fisheries officer, Major A. J. Parker.

Now, after surveys, the plea is to increase the minimum size of hen crabs to 6in. and of cock crabs to 6in.

The message went in a telegram signed by William Badcock, the chairman, on behalf of all Devon inshore fishermen.

But there was cheerful message for the committee at its quarterly meeting from the county's chief fisheries officer, Mr. Worden, who said that in the past decade Brixham and Plymouth had more than doubled their landings of demersal and pelagic fish.

Also, the shellfish fleets of Dartmouth and Salcombe had "held their heads high" as the top crab landing stations in the county.

The committee is to ask the MAFF to raise the minimum size of crabs which can be landed at British ports, so as to help preserve diminishing stocks.

In 1972 the committee's plea to raise the minimum from 4in. was rejected by the Ministry, which said that the

evidence then submitted was not sufficient to warrant a change.

Now, after surveys, the plea is to increase the minimum size of hen crabs to 6in. and of cock crabs to 6in.

The new rates of interest for boats under 50ft. and new engines are, up to five years, 14 per cent; five to 10 years, 15 per cent; 10 to 15 years, 16 per cent; over 15 years, 16 1/2 per cent.

For processing plants, up to five years, 18 per cent; five to 10 years, 18 1/2 per cent; 10 to 15 years, 19 per cent; 15 to 20 years, 19 1/2 per cent. The rates on advances made before January 8 are unchanged.

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FIRST SHETLAND HERRING

THE FIRST herring of the year was landed at Lerwick, Shetland, this week and indications are that there is plenty of fish about.

The local boats *Aniara* and *Azalea* have been landing herring, which has sold for £14 to £17 a unit to the Norwegian klondyker *Jemo* and to local processors.

The Fraserburgh boat *Vivian* took a catch of 1,300 units during the middle of the week. A second klondyker, *Midnight Sun*, was expected to arrive at the beginning of the week and other local boats are preparing to change over to herring because of the scarcity of pout.

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GRANTS: BEATING THE 'WORK-START' RULE

SIR, Following the latest FEQA awards to fishing projects it may be of interest to some of the beneficiaries to learn the following information:

On the announcement by HM Government late in 1972 that FEQA grants would be available for fishing projects, this company submitted applications on behalf of clients.

Ten were approved in the 1973 or 1974 awards, the eleventh being rejected on the grounds that work had been started on the project before the application was acknowledged by the Commission as a condition set out in paragraph 5 of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland's letter to the Scottish Inshore White Fish Producers' Association dated December 7, 1972).

On compiling claims for payment in January 1978 in respect of the ten successful applications, we were horrified

LETTERS

to find that work on a further two of the projects had started before the receipt of the applications by the Commission, a point which would disqualify the two projects from receiving the grant they had already been awarded.

We immediately compiled a written case for Douglas Henderson, SNP Member of Parliament for East Aberdeenshire, stating our reasons why it had been virtually impossible to comply with the "work-start" rule because of:

- (i) The late notification of the grant system to the catching side of the industry.
- (ii) The complexity of the application itself and the lack of information as to how to set it out.
- (iii) The extremely high building programme in early 1973 and

consequently, the high number of projects eligible.

At a meeting with Mr. Henderson in London in the last week of January 1978 he immediately agreed to approach the Under-Secretary of State for Scotland.

In March 1978 Mr. Henderson informed us that we should submit claims for payment in respect of the two applications in question to the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries for Scotland, as he thought it was now possible for the matter to be settled satisfactorily.

He also stated that he had been informed by the Under-Secretary of State that, after further consultations between the DAFS and the EEC Commission, the DAFS was now accepting applications in respect of fishing boats after the work has been started, provided that the Commission's acknowledgement was received before the boat was delivered.

This news meant that

several fishing partnerships which had submitted FEQA applications originally because work had started on their vessels, were now able to apply. We understood that those who did so successfully in 1978.

Our belief is that, but Henderson's intervention, the "work-start" rule would have remained unbroken and several partnerships would have foregone grants of FEQA.

For our own part, we are pleased to say that we have a happy ending to the two applications which were the subject of our letter to the DAFS, and we were successful in obtaining a 50-mile exclusive limit for Britain.

Galley, R. J. (1978)

NORTH SHIELDS is growing in importance as an inshore port. Provisional figures for 1976 show that about 1,300,000 cwt. of all species of fish sold there for just over £7m. in 1976, as against 888,500 cwt. fetching £4.4m. in 1975.

With the decline of the Humber ports, North Shields could well play an increasingly important role in the future. Its geographical position gives it greater potential than almost any other British port, especially within the context of Britain's new 200-mile limit and the cut-back in distant water fishing.

The richest North Sea grounds are only a few hours steam from the Tyne and there is rapid road access to the Midlands and south.

Existing fish quay and berthing facilities are inadequate, but the plan to build a new fish dock has not been ruled out. If the scheme goes ahead, it will be the first time for about a century that a whole new fishery harbour has been built in the British Isles from scratch and on such an important scale.

Already new premises for fish merchants are being built and have been designed so that they would fit in with any new fish dock development.

Major landings at the port still stem from white fish with 307,000 cwt., mainly from inshore trawlers and seine netters, fetching about £4.4 m. in 1976. However, in recent years, a vigorous export fishery has developed and in 1976 the landings and value were about double the 1975 figures.

The current sprat season is now in full swing and December saw about 75 vessels from Scottish and English ports taking part.

During the few weeks from November 28 until the end of the year, the season had its best start ever when 313,244 cwt. was sold for £757,167.

The bulk of sprat landings went for fish meal with prices pushing up to the 250-a-ton mark.

While fishermen are paying about 25-a-ton for road transport from North Shields to the Humber fish meal plants, the big prices together with heavy catches are making the fishery well worthwhile.

In the few weeks prior to December 31, only 28,649 cwt. was sold for pet food and 3,739 cwt. for fresh.

Prices varied from about £3.88 a cwt. for pet food to £10.50 for human consumption; the cran measure is still used as catches are discharged by basket.

Sprats destined for fish meal can be unloaded much more rapidly by means of "diggers" mounted on the quayside.

With prices for fish meal now about on a par with those for fresh and pet food, the meal fishery is more lucrative as boats unloading by "digger" have a faster turn round.

In the past, sprats have been taken off the Tyne and the Durham coast, but this season they are swimming much further south.

At the end of the year the fleet was fishing off Whitby and Scarborough. By the end of the first week in January boats were having to steam as far south as Flamborough Head. This has prompted the Grimsby boats which were based at North Shields earlier

in the season to take their catches straight into the Humber.

One or two Scottish boats, and odd boat belonging to North Shields, have also put into Grimsby.

Quality of the sprats this season is fairly mixed, with the fish ranging in size from about 6 to 15 cm.

The boats are able to fish for sprats at any time of day or night and, so, normally just stay at sea until they get a full flashroom. With the shoals moving so far away from North Shields this season, the boats are having to make longer trips. But, once they find the 'marks', most of them have enjoyed heavy fishing.

Fishing News visited North Shields during the first week in January when boats were making their first trips of the year.

The four 56 ft. Buckie-based sister-ships *Unity*, *Jansen*, *Celcius* and *Morning Star* made two big landings during the week.

Between them they put ashore about 180 tons after a 22 hour trip and, later in the week, landed 200 tons for 30 hours at sea. With the grounds a six-hour steam away from port, this is an excellent result.

All four boats are of stern trawler layout and were built of steel by Herd and McKenzie of Buckie during the last four years or so. They are working as a foursome using Iver Christensen four-panel pair trawls.

Two larger Scottish pair trawlers arrived at North Shields in the New Year after switching from the west coast herring fishing: the 86 ft. Tynedraft-designed steel vessels *Day Dawn II* and *Golden Dawn* under Skippers James Tait of Inverloch and Andrew Cowe of Peterhead.

On Friday, January 7, *Day Dawn II* landed 120 tons of sprats, but *Golden Dawn* had only 20 tons following mechanical trouble.

Good 'marks' had been found about six miles east of Flamborough Head. Skipper Cowe said: 'We're glad that we came because there is good money to be made at the sprats'.

Many other Scots from ports as far north as Buckie are working sprats. These in-

NORTH SHIELDS



The 86ft. Peterhead registered *Day Dawn II* (Skipper James Tait) ready to unload a catch of about 120 tons

-meal prices but sprat fishing

clude the new 74 ft. wooden boat *Scarlet Thread II* which has been built by the Malahide shipyard, Dublin, for Skipper Tom Buchanan of Port Seton (Details of this boat will appear soon in *Fishing News*).

Scarlet Thread II is working in partnership with *Scarlet Chord III*, built in Norway for the Buchanan family about three years ago.

Skipper Tom Buchanan of *Scarlet Thread II* said that

the sprat shoals are not so big and dense as in previous years, but there is good fishing once the 'spots' are located.

The majority of locally owned vessels are also joining in the spratting.

Skipper Cliff Ellis and the 87 ft. Danish-built steel vessel *Christine Nielsen* are having a particularly good season. Another new boat, the 65 ft. *Sonia*, has also begun fishing. She has just been

completed by Robsons Boatbuilders Ltd., of South Shields for Skipper Terence McEneaney of North Shields.

A good performance is also being put up by the five vessels operated from North Shields by Newington Trawlers Ltd., namely *Cherry Burton*, *Hurton Constable*, *Bishop Burton*, *Burton Palsen* and *Burton Agnes*.

It is now more than two years since this Humber-

based deep-sea trawler of the New Year she landed 109 tons after a 36-hour trip.

The 75 ft. wooden-hulled *Cherry Burton*, under Skipper Colin Pearce, put ashore a 91-ton catch for her first trip of the year.

All the Newington boats are working single-boat Boris design and general performance is very satisfactory.

The three vessels yet to be delivered to Newington are under construction at the Eyemouth Boatbuilding Co. and the first is scheduled for delivery in March. All are 75 ft. long with Caterpillar engines and split winches.

Skippers for the three boats have yet to be appointed.

Another welcome arrival at North Shields is the 97 ft. *Persevere*. Formerly the

unloaded by 'digger' on to a truck for transport to the meal plant. Below: the 56ft. steel-hulled trawler *Bishop Burton* (Skipper Terry Fairley) is having a good run

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said that the boat had proved The 56ft. Buckie steel-hulled trawler *Unity* coming into North Shields with a good catch of sprats.

In Devon, *Persevere* had been working with a Cornish crew but they had not wanted to work sprats. A North Shields crew has now joined the boat.

Although the new crew is still getting accustomed to working sprat gear, *Persevere* has made a very encouraging start from North Shields and has had landings of 80 tons.

Skipper Johnstone expects to be based at North Shields, switching to seine netting at the end of the winter sprat season.

Skipper Peter Johnstone



Persevere unloading a catch of sprats in North Shields. She has been mackerel fishing from the West Country since her modifications at the Bideford Shipyard.

report by GLORIA WILSON

Drifting even deeper

"I HAVE been fishing nine score drift nets this winter fairly successfully."

"I fished them from the surface down in seven fathoms and usually most of the fish were in the bottom half of the nets. My echo sounder generally showed that they were well down in the water."

I am, accordingly, trying to find out how I can let the nets down on 1½ — 2 fm. strops. Do I take the cork off or do I put more weight on the foot-rope?"

■ I believe that the best way to rig your nets is to add to their foot-rope leadlines which will make them sink. Then, if you attach buoys at the junctions between them on 1½ — 2 fm. strops, they should fish at the required depth.

If you are working a small fleet of nets, you can lie to them by a rope attached to the headline of the nearest net. But if you are going to work a big one, your best plan would probably be to attach larger buoys on longer strops above the junctions of the nets.

The strops should be about a fathom longer than the depth of the nets. Headlines should be secured to them 1½ — 2 fm. below the buoys and a stout warp should be attached to their bottom ends.

You will then be able to lie to the nets by both a rope attached to the headline of the nearest net and the warp, and there will be no risk of headlines parting in rough weather.

Quick-splicing polythene rope

ROPE THAT you can splice in a fraction of the time it would take you to splice any other type of rope has recently become available.

Known as Polysplice rope, it is made of orange polyethylene and is about 1½ in. in circumference. It consists of eight ¼ in. circumference strands loosely braided together so that if you compress the rope longitudinally at one end they open up and make it possible to insert the other end of the rope through the middle of them. If you then decompress, the strands close and take a firm grip on the end of the rope inserted.

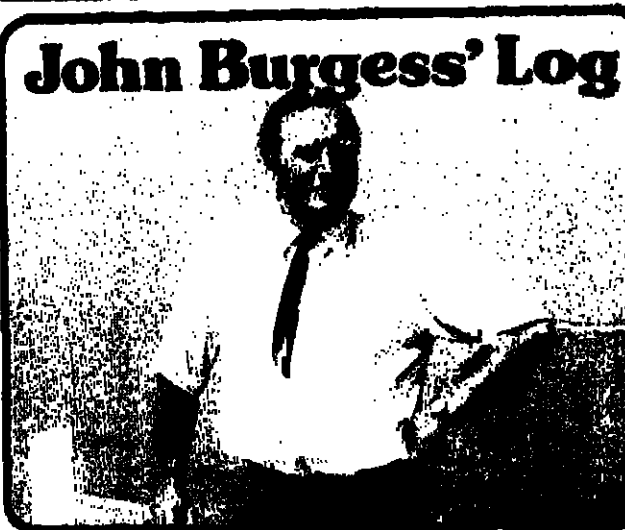
Eye splice

You can not only splice lengths of rope together in this way, but you can splice the rope back on itself to form an eye splice, or around a thimble, with equal ease and speed.

So long as you pass between 6-8 in. of the free end through the open strands, the splice will hold firmly when tension is put on it.

If you want to remove a splice, you can do so as quickly and easily as you made it; all you have to do is to compress the strands again and withdraw the free end of rope.

As far as I know Polysplice is only being produced in this one size at present. This has a breaking strength of 3,360 lb. so it should be suitable for



John Burgess' Log

making all sorts of slings and grommets and for scores of other applications.

No doubt it will be made in larger and smaller sizes in due course and its uses increased.

Less costly

It is interesting to ruminate on what its applications might be if the same type of construction could be employed to braid flexible steel wire instead of polythene strands. Work involved in putting splices in wire ropes would become far less costly.

Further information about Polysplice is obtainable from Daraport Ltd., 'Laundate', Dukes Road, Newdigate, Surrey.

General purpose coupling links

SINCE I described some coupling links on October 1, I have learnt another fact or two about the range which is being imported by Euroquip (Tooling) Ltd.

In addition to the standard series of links, a series of longer links are now available and the latter, I think, are preferable for general purpose use.

They can be opened wider than standard links and, in practice, you are likely to find that they are more generally useful than standard links for this reason.

Say you want to fit a link round a thimble in an eye splice at the end of a rope. If you use a standard link you are likely to have to fit it to the thimble and then splice the rope around the latter — which means that you cannot remove the link thereafter.

But if you use a long series, wide mouth link, you can splice the rope around the thimble, fit the link and thereafter remove it like an ordinary shackle whenever you want.

This is a one solitary instance of the advantages of wide mouth links. I could cite many more.

As well as these links, one devised for use by seiners in Denmark is also available. This is made of ½ in. diameter steel rod, is 6 in. long and is designed to take 1 in. diameter rope or chain at one end and 2 in. diameter rope or chain at the other. I don't know the particular purpose for which this link is used in Danish seiners, but I do know that its shape makes it useful for some purposes in any fishing vessel.

Chain

Say, for instance, you want to join a 3 in. circ. fibre rope with a thimble spliced in the end to a length of chain. The thimble will fit comfortably in the wide end of the link and the end link of the chain in the other. If there is no thimble in the end of the fibre rope, there is plenty of room to hitch it to the link.

If you want to secure both a length of chain and a length of nylon rope to the upper end of a mooring swivel, the wide end of the link will take them both. There may be more similar uses for this link.

There might be uses in fishing vessels, too, for a

MOST items of gear and equipment sent to me for test perform as claimed by their manufacturers.

The performance, of some, however, falls far short of claims made for them in sales literature and as a result of one or two recent experiences, I think you would be well advised not to believe implicitly all that is written in product data sheets.

Maybe they are written in good faith. But maybe some of those responsible for their publication don't have proper facilities for testing their products in a marine environment or find it uneconomical in the short term to test them thoroughly under working conditions before launching them on marine markets.

Maybe there are other factors which affect the veracity

of claims. A producer of antifouling compositions may be a new one in certain areas and find it gives comparatively good protection for the time he intends to charge for it. A cross-section of craft in those areas. But it may prove poor value for money when applied to vessels engaged in different types of operation elsewhere.

Claims made for a composition which I tried not long ago may have been quite justifiable and it may have been effective when applied to the bottoms of craft kept in the vicinity of the manufacturer's premises. But on the bottom of my boat it was more effective for keeping a free of fouling organisms than black varnish.

Likewise, a product for protecting underwater metal fittings which I recently tested. It may be effective in American waters, but hereabouts it is just the opposite.

I was highly impressed by claims made for this product in sales literature. I thought might be just what a lot of boat owners want — a composition which will keep underwater fittings free of fouling organisms and protect them against galvanic and electrolytic action.

I accordingly cut two steel plates, coated one with the composition in strict accordance with the distributor's instructions, left the other untreated, and fitted them on either side of the rudder.

That was about four months ago. I have inspected the plates and found that there were no many, if not more, barnacles and weed growths on the plate which had been coated as on the other.

No names; no pack deal. But if you are tempted by advertisements and persuasive sales brochures to buy a quantity of a product for which such claims are made, I suggest you obtain a sample for test before you do.

Wire steering gear wanted

"I HAVE a 30 ft. boat which is steered with a hand-operated tiller."

"I intend to build a wheelhouse forward and install a wheel and wire/pulley steering gear. But I cannot find anyone who can supply the necessary components — wheel, quadrant, sheaves etc."

"I should, therefore, be grateful if you could send me the name and address of a supplier."

■ Simpson-Lawrence can supply complete wire steering gear assemblies for boats your size. They are available in pedestal or bulkhead form with a variety of types and sizes of wheels, four sizes of quadrant and three alternative sheave mountings.

Output torques at the rudder post vary from 280 lb/ft. with an 8 in. radius quadrant and 24 in. diameter wheel to 745 lb/ft. with a 14 in. radius quadrant and 36 in. diameter wheel.

Quadrants are fitted with terminals for 5 mm diameter stainless steel wire, terminals which can be adjusted for tensioning.

Simpson-Lawrence's

headquarters are at 218 Briston Drive, Glasgow, where the firm has distribution many parts of the country and you may save transport costs if you call the address of your nearest one.

Getting to grips

"I KEEP a Woden vice on board for splicing wire."

"A short while ago the vice broke and I have since been trying to find the name and address of the makers of the type of vice — without success."

"I should be most grateful if you could let me know the manufacturers, etc. and suggest where I can get a replacement."

■ Manufacturers of Woden vices is Joseph Woden Ltd., Woden Works, Balata Road, Walsingham, West Midlands.

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DIESEL TERMS

"I AM confused by the terms used for describing the combustion systems of diesel engines — direct and indirect injection, open chamber, pre-chamber and swirl chamber. Can you please explain precisely what each means?"

■ All the terms you mention are used to describe one or other of two primary types of combustion systems. Direct injection and open chamber are used to describe one type; indirect injection,

pre-chamber and swirl chamber to describe the other.

In the first type atomized fuel spray is injected directly into the combustion chamber — the space between the top of the piston and the cylinder head — under high pressure. It is forced through six or eight holes in the injector tip which rip the fuel into minute particles.

These are uniformly distributed and exposed to the air across the crown of the piston and so complete combustion is achieved.

In the second type of system — employed mostly in slow or medium speed diesels — a comparatively coarse stream of fuel is forced through a valve into a pre-combustion or swirl chamber located near the cylinder head.

As it contains hot air, it starts to burn and build up pressure in the chamber, and this pressure forces the burning mixture at high velocity into the combustion chamber proper in the upper part of the cylinder.

OAR SLEEVE

"CAN YOU tell me where I can get leathers for oars? I used to buy them — years ago — from a firm called Leaflets but I no longer have its address."

■ I doubt whether you can get ready-made leather sleeves for oars anywhere nowadays, but you can always buy leather from any saddler to make them yourself.

Leather sleeves have been superseded by polythene sleeves which are far more durable than leather. The leather, I think, is mostly imported from Norway.

You may be able to get them from Hayward Spear Ltd., The Old Maltings, Wickham Market, Suffolk; if not, from Hugh Norman (Marine Sales) Ltd., Ythan Cottage, Inverurie, Ellon, Aberdeenshire.

Get estimates in writing

"THREE months ago I had my boat hauled out for some repairs and the engine to be replaced. I was quoted a price for slipping, for the repairs, for installing the new engine and for re-launching. The quotation was a verbal one and I accepted it verbally."

"Now I have received an invoice for over £200 for work involved in fitting the engine — in addition to the account for slipping and repairs. What can I do about it?"

■ You can refuse to pay the account and let the boatyard proprietor sue you, or you can endeavour to come to some arrangement with him about it amicably.

You are both at fault and you may both have to pay for making a major mistake in

the first place. With all the goodwill in the world, it is possible for misunderstandings to be made in verbal contracts. And it is the height of folly not to confirm any made, in writing, as soon as possible afterwards.

If a boat builder, boatyard proprietor or marine engineer is not in the habit of making quotations in writing and you come to a verbal agreement with him about the cost of work to be done, possible later disagreement can be avoided by writing him a note and keeping a copy of it shortly after your confabulation.

If you state in it what you understand to be the terms of the agreement and he accepts it without contradiction, no situation such as that which you find yourself in can arise.

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